



President of FBBA Mr Pierre Imhof, who is also the General Manager of Baiduri Bank

## Boosting business ties with France



Musa Adnin, Honorary President of FBBA

### Association to develop trade opportunities

By Sonia K.

THE French Bruneian Business Association which was launched in November 1999 is made up of high-profile business people and representatives from the international chambers of commerce, Malay Chamber of Commerce, Chinese Chamber of Commerce and BIMP-EAGA Economic Business Council. The association's Executive Committee is elected on a yearly basis.

The association's 80 members comprise private business people in Brunei Darussalam with French interests and/or potential French interests /partnerships and government officials who are honorary members.

According to the President of FBBA, Mr Pierre Imhof, who is also the General Manager of Baiduri Bank, the aim of the association is to provide a mutual forum of exchange for French and Bruneian business partners as a means to strengthen business relationships.

Secondly, it aims to disseminate economic information to members on



Ambassador of France to Brunei and Patron of the French Bruneian Business Association, Mr Patrick Bonneville

matters of interest and to serve as a means of discussing such matters. The association also seeks to develop the image of Brunei in France and vice versa to promote trade, commerce and industry as well as to develop business opportunities between Brunei and France.

Ambassador of France to Brunei and Patron of the French Bruneian Business Association, Mr Patrick Bonneville, who has been here for four months feels that the association is being very widely represented in Brunei with local companies having French relations. He hopes to create more cohesion and dynamism with the local members in the association.

It helps quite a lot in the networking with one another as well as developing a sense of interest, gathering Bruneian thoughts together.

He aims to enhance good relations with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to exchange information and ideas on international situation. "I personally would like to attract more French companies to come here and see that the Bruneian market is interesting, it has potential," he said.

He stressed that French companies can be helpful in participating in the development of the country. Other than that, Mr Bonneville is determined to help form more structure in the association and invites more businessmen to become members as well as convince more French companies to come here. He will help them

in their dynamism and make it an important part of the economic life in Brunei.

With over 15 companies under his portfolio, Musa Adnin who is the Honorary President of FBBA is a very busy entrepreneur. Based in Kuala Belait, Musa is often travelling as he has wide business interests in Asia, Middle East and Europe. Yet, Musa has found time to hold the position of Honorary President of the FBBA.

Asked about his role in the FBBA, he said that although the post of Honorary President is non-executive in nature, however as a local, he would do his best to promote Bruneian interest.

"Our members, from various industries and interests, are active and give their full support and cooperation to the Executive Committee," he said.

Currently FBBA is the more active and visible business association in the country and this is made possible with active and responsible Executive Members. "We also get full support from the French Embassy with the Patron and French Ambassador, His Excellency Mr. Patrick Bonneville playing an active role in the life of the association.

"The Executive Committee headed by the President, Mr. Pierre Imhof, will finalise the association's 2006 plan for its members soon. Judging from informal discussions, it's going to be very interesting and exciting."



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**FBBA..The Friendly Association that Delivers**

In just a few short years, the French Bruneian Business Association has grown from an anonymous club tucked within the premises of the then French Trade Commission to its proactive nature of networking today.

**The Beginning...**

At the turn of the millenium, the idea of a French Trade Club took root-the brainchild of Mr. Jean Barbé, Economic Counsellor of the French Trade Commission. That was year 2000. Its objectives :

- To provide a mutual forum of exchange for French business partners in Brunei with the French Trade Commission and subsequently with France.
- To disseminate information to members on matters concerning French trade and economy. Simply said...to put a face to the French Business Community

An action plan was put in place with the setting up of a protem committee made up of French and Bruneian business people with the expertise and the interest in making this club a success.

A couple of brainstorming sessions as was expected from this think tank...

What name would truly instill the identity of bi-lateral relations and business networking

What name would conjure the authenticity of the local Bruneian touch interwoven with the French Connection...

What name would signify the seriousness of its intent with a personal and fun-loving approach...

From this committee, the name FBBA - the French Bruneian Business Association came about. The logo with its colours represented both Brunei and France.

Together with His Excellency Mr. Jean-Pierre Lafosse, Ambassador of France in Brunei Darussalam, the French Bruneian Business Association was officially inaugurated under its new name on 30 June , 2000. Finally an official bonafide association fully registered with the Registrar of Societies.

In November 2001, the Kuala Belait Branch Office was set up supported by a team of excom members based there.

In 2002, His Excellency, Mr. Thierry Borja de Mozota, French Ambassador (2002 - 2005) became the next patron of the FBBA. Under his very active and participative patronage, FBBA became synonymous with an association that is proactive, functionable and really delivers what it has set out to do.

The rest is history...as a succession of yearly activities are planned. Today under the patronage of His Excellency, Mr. Patrick Bonneville, French Ambassador and the excom, FBBA will continue being as active and as the friendly association that delivers....

**FBBA Regulars**

Talks...Varied and Far Ranging...Intellectual Property Rights/Tourism :Making the Impossible Possible/Expecting the Unexpected/Economic Integration of Asean/the Bimp-Eaga Region/Brunei, Where do we go from here/Economic Diversification/Oil & Gas;Third Generation/Radio Frequency Identification....and the list goes on Speakers...Interesting/Expert/In Demand as speakers... Annual Get-Togethers...fun, personal networking with high-ranking government officials & members.

The most recent talk on 16 November organised by the FBBA garnered tremendous interest from members and guests with an attendance of over 150 persons. This talk, "Labour & Employment Issues of Brunei Darussalam" by Guest Speaker the Commissioner of Labour, Awang Haji Omar echoed on with comments in the Hotline pages of the Borneo Bulletin.

Such are the nature of talks organised by the French Bruneian Business Association. That's the logic behind what the FBBA is known...the Friendly Association that Delivers...

FBBA presents an opportunity for you to register as a member with a modest fee of \$200 which includes registration and annual fee for the first year and thereafter a yearly fee of \$100/-

**Going the extra mile**

- 2000/2001 Bruneian Delagation to International food & Beverage Exhibition in Singapore
- 2002 Bonjour FBBA...A bi-monthly Radio Show with Pelangi Air
- 2003 Parfum d'Egypte, les route du Parfum Exhibition
- Bowling tournament
- 2004 Savoir Faire, French Food Celebration
- Football with Chinese Chambers of Commerce
- 2005 Badminton & Golf Tournament
- Family Day

In the true spirit of FBBA is wishing the Muslim Community, "Selamat Hari Raya" still... The International Community, " Merry Christmas & Happy New Year" and the Chinese Community, "Gong Xi Fa Cai"

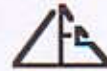


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